Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Currently Amended) ~~An image processing apparatus as set forth in claim 1,~~ An image processing apparatus comprising:

an intrablock pixel position judging section for judging pixel position within a block in which pixels constituting image are divided in units of plural pixels;

a shifted pixel designating section for designating shifted pixel to be shifted in accordance with the pixel position judged by the intrablock pixel position judging section;

a phase calculating section for determining phase quantity of intrablock dot cluster for every block; and

a pixel value shift section for carrying out shift from respective pixels within the block to the shifted pixel on the basis of the phase quantity determined by the phase calculating section and, value differences of respective pixels within the block and value of the shifted pixel, the pixel value shift section comprising:

a shift operation/reference position selecting section for generating a reference position signal and a shift operation select signal from coordinate of main scanning direction and coordinate of sub scanning direction within the block; and

a shift operation section for carrying out shift operation from pixel data and phase quantity supplied to an operation circuit, which is selected by the shift operation select signal.

3. - 4. (Cancelled)

5. (Currently Amended) ~~An image processing apparatus as set forth in claim 1,~~ An image processing apparatus comprising:

an intrablock pixel position judging section for judging pixel position within a block in which pixels constituting image are divided in units of plural pixels;

a shifted pixel designating section for designating shifted pixel to be shifted in accordance with the pixel position judged by the intrablock pixel position judging section;

\ a phase calculating section for determining phase quantity of intrablock dot cluster for every block; and

a pixel value shift section for carrying out shift from respective pixels within the block to the shifted pixel on the basis of the phase quantity determined by the phase calculating section and, value differences of respective pixels within the block and value of the shifted pixel, wherein the pixel value shift section comprises:

shift quantity judging means for determining distribution of shift quantity to the shifted pixel of respective pixels within the block on the basis of the phase quantity, values of respective pixels within the block and value of the shifted pixel; and

a shift operation section for shifting the shift quantity to the shifted pixel.

6. (Original) An image processing apparatus as set forth in claim 5,

wherein the shift operation section serves to carry out shift operation so as to shift (move), in a distributed manner, pixel quantity of shift pixel with respect to plural different pixels in accordance with the phase quantity.

7. (Original) An image processing apparatus as set forth in claim 6,

wherein distributing shift (movement) of pixel quantity of shift pixel by the shift operation section is carried out in such a manner that center of gravity position by pixels within block before shift is also maintained after shifting.

8. - 10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently Amended) ~~An image processing apparatus as set forth in claim 9,~~ An image processing apparatus comprising:

an intrablock pixel position judging section for judging pixel position within a block in which pixels constituting image are divided in units of plural pixels;

a shifted pixel designating section for designating shifted pixel to be shifted in accordance with the pixel position judged by the intrablock pixel position judging section;

a phase calculating section for determining phase quantity of intrablock dot cluster for every block; and

a pixel value shift section for carrying out shift from respective pixels within the block

to the shifted pixel on the basis of the phase quantity determined by the phase calculating section and, value differences of respective pixels within the block and value of the shifted pixel, wherein the shifted pixel designating section determines shift pixel position in such a manner that shifted pixels are disposed in a distributed manner on line having a predetermined angle with respect to the main scanning direction or the sub scanning direction wherein the image processing apparatus serves to process color image, and

the shifted pixel ~~position judging~~ designating section determines shift pixel position in such a manner that angles of line on which shifted pixels are disposed in a distributed manner are caused to be different with respect to plural images obtained by carrying out color separation of color image.

12. - 14. (Cancelled)